

Facilities Upgrade will Ensure Continued Strategic Importance of Base

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) and Congressman John Hall (D-NY) today announced that \$3.75 million for an aircraft conversion facility, which would position the Stewart Air National Guard Base to accept C-17 aircraft, has been included in the Fiscal Year 2011 defense authorization bill. Hinchey, who sits on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, was instrumental in securing the funding, which will help ensure Stewart remains a critical base for the Air National Guard. The base is one of the region's largest employers, generating over \$216 million in annual economic activity in the Lower Hudson Valley.

"This is great news for Stewart and the 105th Airlift Wing," said Hinchey. "The replacement of the aging fleet of C-5A transport planes is essential to the base's future and the safety of our troops. Upgrading to the more efficient and reliable C-17s has been one of my top priorities, and I'm thrilled to have secured more than enough authorized funding to allow the base to accept this critical mission. By solidifying Stewart's position as an essential base for the Air National Guard, we are also ensuring that the base remains one of the largest employers and economic drivers in our region."

The 105th Airlift Wing at Stewart has some of the oldest C-5As in the Air Force inventory. As one of only two National Guard bases on the Eastern Seaboard that provides transatlantic flights to service members abroad, Stewart provides essential services for U.S. armed forces, especially in the responsive delivery of both heavy and light forces and cargo to meet rapid deployment.

"Replacing the aging C-5A fleet with new C-17 aircraft will secure the future of the 105th Airlift Wing and potentially affect the lives of thousands who live in the area," said Hall. "The funding authorized in the FY 2011 National Defense Authorization bill will give Stewart Air National Guard Base the facilities to make this important transition and to accept C-17 aircraft."

Substantial upgrades are needed at Stewart in order to accept the C-17 mission. The \$3.75 million will be used to construct a composite material shop area and reconfigure space needed to meet the unique requirements of the C-17. The squadron ops area will also be expanded to

accommodate an increased number of aircrews.

In March, Hinchey and Hall pushed Air Force Chief of Staff General Norton A. Schwartz to explain the delay in delivery of C-17s to Stewart. In 2008, Hinchey and Hall voted to fund an additional 15 C-17 aircraft in the Fiscal Year 2008 Supplemental Appropriations measure. However, these aircraft have yet to reach the 105th Airlift Wing due to an Air Force-wide study called the Mobility and Capabilities Requirements Study (MCRS).

Hinchey and hall have continually worked to ensure that Stewart remains an essential and strategic base for the Air National Guard. In January, Hinchey announced a \$4 million dollar federal investment to pay for the construction of a solar farm at the base that will serve as a model for other military installations across the country, which are required to generate 25 percent of their energy from renewable sources by 2025. Last March, Hinchey and Hall announced more than \$3.6 million for Stewart from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which they strongly supported and voted to pass.